



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**  
**REGION 10**  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98101

May 14, 2007

Reply To  
Attn Of: ETPA-088

Ref: 03-040-AFS

Jerry R. Reese, Forest Supervisor  
Caribou-Targhee National Forest  
1405 Hollipark Drive  
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

Dear Mr. Reese:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the **Aspen Range Timber Sale** (CEQ No. 20050158) in accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. Section 309, independent of NEPA, specifically directs EPA to review and comment in writing on the environmental impacts associated with all major federal actions and the document's adequacy in meeting NEPA requirements.

The draft EIS documents the analysis for the proposed Aspen Range Timber Sale in the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. Proposed actions include mechanical timber harvest, prescribed fire and transportation improvements within a 12,000 acre project area. The proposed actions would change tree species composition, density and structure in an effort to release aspen from competing conifers and convert back to early seral species and reduce undesirable wildfire conditions.

We appreciate the efforts you and your staff have taken to address our comments and concerns with the draft EIS. In particular, we appreciate the clarification provided in the stated purpose and need for the proposed project and the additional information provided regarding best management practices (BMPs) to control erosion. We understand that that meeting the Desired Future Condition (DFC) for stand structure will take multiple future projects on a smaller scale than the proposed project. We recommend that the Service tier off of this EIS when developing future projects aimed at meeting DFC in the project area.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this final EIS. If you would like to discuss these comments in detail, please contact Mike Letourneau at (206) 553-6382 or myself at (206) 553-1601.

Sincerely,

/s/

Christine Reichgott, Manager  
NEPA Review Unit